



Chicago Metropolitan  
Agency for Planning

[www.cmap.illinois.gov](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov)

# WOW: Working on Wellness

*A project to increase the health of high school students*

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*April 20, 2010*





# Getting the Idea

The FLIP Human Services group felt a major issue affecting a wide variety of teens, regardless of location, is **stress**. The International Child and Youth Care Network found in a 2002 high school survey that of 815 students who participated, 70 percent said they were “stressed out.” By using WOW (Working On Wellness), schools and organizations can help reduce this stress through physical and social activities while incorporating additional educational enrichment.

## Problems to Address

1. Many students do not qualify or choose to participate in competitive activities.
2. Many students don’t realize the benefits of simple wellness and relaxation programs.
3. All high school students deal with stress or anxiety due to common academic and social pressures.



## Preferred Regional Scenario

1. “Foster an educated, healthy, safe, and involved populace.”
2. “Provide access to quality education... cultural and social amenities.”
3. “Achieve significant and lasting quality-of-life-benefits.”

## The FLIP Solution

FLIP proposes an after school wellness program where all students are welcome to participate in multiple activities. The activities will offer students information pertaining to physical and mental wellness with a significant focus on maintaining individual health. Students will experience physical benefits in a non-competitive environment while forming long lasting relationships in a positive atmosphere. Social and mental



benefits will also be available through a sense of community. The activities will help students to gain clear minds and reduce stress.

## Potential Activities

Weekly WOW meetings would alternate activities all geared toward wellness. Some potential activities are as follows: yoga, pilates, softball, rugby, swimming, cycling, aerobics, nutritional education, movie days, board games, music days, nature walks, outdoor activities, school-specific activities, benefit/charity walks, social walks, and anything else you can think of!





# Options to fit your needs

## *Scenario 1:*

Funding available

- Space ready
- Instruction/DVDs on hand
- Activity-specific materials
- Access to certified instructors
- Possible catering

## *Scenario 2:*

Fundraising (Sponsorship, grants, etc.)

- Connect with community stores that aim to reach teens
- Community and school raffle
- Use of classroom space afterschool
- Access to free online content and basic materials
- Potluck food activities



## Timeline

**Step One:** Planning the program (4-6 weeks)

- Gain approval from school or organization
- Acquire space for the activities
- Select an adult sponsor (teacher, counselor, parent, ect.)
- Fundraise
- Create a schedule of events
- Acquire supplies
- Survey the students on student-viewed needs

**Step Two:** Get the Word Out (2 weeks)

- Make announcements
- Create flyers/ posters
- Recruit reliable students to support the program

**Step Three:** Taking Action (1 meeting/ follow up)

- Collect student feedback (goals and suggestions for WOW)

- Follow through with schedule based on the feedback

**Step Four:** Going Further (ongoing)

- Use program annually
- Encourage other schools and centers to use WOW

## **Outcomes**

- A physically healthier student body
- A socially apt student body
- A common understanding of stress management
- Life-long habits, friends and attitudes for a better future
- Reduced violence
- Improved attendance
- Reduced drop-out rate
- Minimal cost to school





# Resources

Many necessary materials are readily available and free. For example, YouTube offers multiple instruction videos which could serve as classroom guides for activities and exercises. The following information was reported on grant funding: “Ideas should be innovative, creative and educational. Grantors will rarely fund operating expenses - they usually invest in supplemental programs. Private foundations often seek creative solutions to problems/needs, but they usually do not wish to fund risky projects (k12grants.org). The WOW Program fits this criteria and would likely have little trouble gaining full funding.





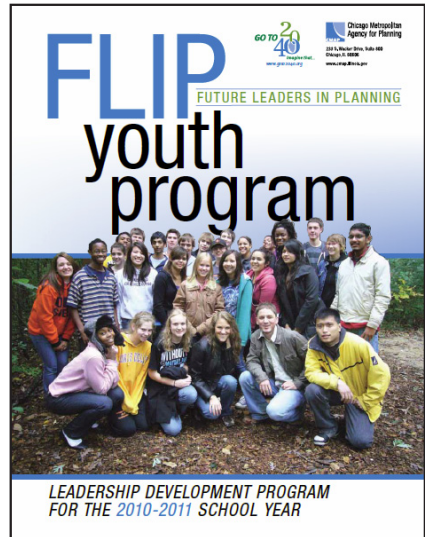
## About CMAP

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) was created in 2005 as the comprehensive regional planning organization for the northeastern Illinois counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will. By state and federal law, CMAP is responsible for developing *GO TO 2040*, metropolitan Chicago's first truly comprehensive regional plan. The agency projects that metropolitan Chicago will gain 2.8 million new residents and 1.8 million jobs in the next three decades. The *GO TO 2040* planning campaign will develop and implement strategies to address that projected growth. Scheduled for completion in 2010, the plan will shape the region's transportation system and development patterns, while also addressing the natural environment, economic development, housing, education, human services and other factors shaping quality of life. See [www.cmap.illinois.gov](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov) and [www.goto2040.org](http://www.goto2040.org) for more information.

## About FLIP

Are you concerned about having better parks? How about the streets in your community? Have you ever wondered why the mall is where it is? Why your school is located where it is? Do you wish someone would do something make life better for you, your family, or your community? The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is looking for high school participants to learn about our region while interacting with other students from various counties. CMAP is interested in your ideas about how to make Northeastern Illinois a better place to live, go to school, work, and play. Please apply to be part of Future Leaders in Planning.

Future Leaders in Planning (FLIP) is a leadership development opportunity offered free-of-charge to students who can contribute ideas to help create a better future for our region. It began in September 2008 and participants in the 2009 program will learn more about the northeastern region and share their thoughts with other teens from Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall,



Lake, McHenry, and Will counties. Participants will also meet and interact with select regional leaders who make key planning decisions in our communities.

To stay updated on FLIP, meet other youth in the region, and blog about issues affecting your community, visit <http://www.facebook.com/pages/CMAPs-FLIP-Future-Leaders-In-Planning-program>